White and Black Children in Public Schools.

SPEECH

OF

HON. THOMAS F. BAYARD,

OF DELAWARE,

DELIVERED

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

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White and Black Children in Public Schools.

The Senate, as in Committee of the Whole, having under consideration the bill (S. No. 365) to secure equal rights in the public schools of Washington and Georgetown—

Mr. BAYARD said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: A low view of political morality might advise a withdrawal of any opposition to a measure like this, trusting that the necessary evils and the sufferings that I am sure will flow from its adoption would react upon the political party whose policy is indicated by such measures; because that reaction will come if such measures are to be enforced as the law I deem perfectly certain. I know that the proposition has lately been enunciated in a very high quarter of this Government that the true method of dealing with an obnoxious law is to rigidly enforce its execution a proposition in my opinion which is as void of statesmanship as it is of sound morality, and which never could have been uttered by a man who had a proper conception of the duties of a civil governor, especially in a Government such as ours was intended to be, a Government founded upon the consent of an intelligent self governing people.

I say it would be a low view of political morality, one certainly that I should never consent to act upon; and therefore it is that at all times and to the extent of my ability, whether marching to victory or defeat, but nevertheless at all times I deem it my duty to oppose measures of a kindred character with the present. Minorities may have terrors to some men; but I have been in one too long, and I have found too much of comfort in being there to let such propositions have any terror for me. A man who makes the performance of duty his object. I am satisfied will be happy, whether he be successful or not.

Now, sir, in my opinion this bill ought to be opposed. It is, in the first place, an utterly unnecessary law. It is uncalled for in any sense. There has been presented to this Senate no indication of popular demand for it. Those who are chiefly to be affected by it are well known to be opposed to it; and it does seem to me, Senators, that the people of this District, utterly unrepresented on the floor of this Senate, are entitled to more than usual consideration, because their voice cannot be expressed. They have no means of voting against measures hostile to their happiness or their interests. They have no means, except by the humble method of petition, of expressing to you what are their sentiments in regard to every measure; and therefore it seems to me that magnanimity alone would call for tenderness of action against the wishes of these people who have no representative in this body. They are in your hands. The control of the Congress of the United States over the District of Columbia is as near being absolute as the forms of a written Constitution can permit. Congress is vested with powers of exclusive legislation on all subjects whatsoever within this District, and here is now a proposition to legislate in regard to that which touches more the social relations, the family interest, the personal feelings of the white people and of the colored people—for I am unmindful of neither—of this District than any measure which, to my knowledge, has yet been brought before the Senate of the United States.

This measure, Mr. President, I propose to prove to the Senate and to the country is utterly unnecessary. Charity does not demand it, justice does not demand it, either to black or to white. There is no need for it. I shall show you by the provision of your own laws that the colored people of this District are amply and generously provided with educational facilities at the cost of the white peo-

ple almost entirely. Nay, further, sir, this law is unjust; it is unjust as well as uncalled for, and it is as cruel as it is either unjust or uncalled for. It is unwise in every point of view. Upon the baser view of mere economy it is unwise; upon the higher view of a true philanthrophy it is unwise. Mr. President, it is, in my opinion, a mere act of visionary zeal. If it has aught to recommend it to the imaginations of men, it will be found that it is a mere act of visionary zeal that men may in the abstract admire, but which in practice must be condemned.

As Madame Roland was dragged to execution past the statue of Liberty on her way to the guillotine, she apostrophized that statue, "Oh, Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" May not the people of America now exclaim, "Oh, Philanthropy, what crimes, what errors, what gross mistakes are committed in thy name!"

Sir, this is the natural result of a devotion to any single idea to the exclusion of a just consideration of those that lie around it. There is not a virtue in the catalogue which is not simply relative, which does not depend upon its being a virtue to the relation that it is permitted to occupy to others, and if any one virtue is pressed to the exclusion of those that naturally lie around it (for the virtues and the vices lie in groups) it becomes an absolute vice. He who of uninspired men understood best the human heart long ago declared:

> "Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied,
> And vice sometimes 's by action dignified."

The devotion of the honorable Senator from Massachusetts to what he believes the cause and the interest of an inferior and weaker race has many elements in it which entitle him to admiration and respect, but pursuing it as he does without limit, and, let me say with due respect, without discretion, without regard to other virtues whose call upon him is as loud as that, his sense of justice to other classes of persons whose claim upon him should be as great seems to be dulled and deadened. His ear seems to catch no cry but one; his philanthropy to echo to but a single appeal.

Then what will be the result if the honorable Senator should succeed in his purpose by energy, by persistence, by a courage which has never failed in the face of the greatest odds, all of which I see, all of which I recognize, because since my manhood I have been most conscientiously in constant opposition to the policy and purposes of that Senator, which I believe to be utterly misdirected in respect to those who are called the colored people of the United States? I will not enter into a comparison of my good will for them with his. It would prove nothing. I do not know that he would shrink more than I from an act of injustice to any individual of that people. Perhaps from the fact that I have lived all my life in a community where numerically this class were stronger, and my personal contact with them more frequent, there has been in the course of my life a more continuous opportunity for kindly personal offices between me and this race of people than the honorable Senator could ever have enjoyed.

But nevertheless, sir, his efforts however well intended, however maintained in the face of strong odds as they have been, and subsequently with an overwhelming majority at his back, although, to do him justice, I believe his course was as steady and onward in the one case as the other—what has been the result, and what does he still propose to be the result of his action? It seems to me that this proposition of his, to mingle in the public schools the children of these different races, is fraught with evil, and dangerous to those whom he may have earnestly and honestly desired to serve. I believe it is grossly injurious to society at large; and the result simply is that in this case we have the spectacle of the statesman and the law-maker completely misled by the enthusiast.

Should legislation be based upon sentimentality or mere enthusiasm? Is that a proper basis? Can laws be made which are the fruit of mere imagination, or mere enthusiasm, or mere zeal for an idea? The history of mankind has shown that such cannot be; that there must be abstract principles constantly running through general laws which shall at times work hardships in individual cases, but which, containing in themselves the natural principles of justice, will vindicate their wisdom by their practical results. It is not for men as we would wish them to be that laws are to be made; it is for men as they are, with all their passions and with all their prejudices.

When Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun said "if a man were permitted to make all the ballads he need not care who should make the laws of a people" he knew well the effect of prejudice, of tradition, of habits, of education upon a people, almost changing the stamp of nature itself, and a law made without reference to the prejudices, if you call them such, or, as I shall term them, the instincts of a people and a race, without due and constant regard to them, under any form of government, is indiscreet, dangerous, constantly mischievous, and still more under a form of government like our own, based upon consent, where the will of the people expressed duly in the forms of law is the proper, underlying sentiment of our Government.

Now, Mr. President, I have stated this bill to be unnecessary. Why? Because already the Congress of the United States by their legislation have made most ample and generous provision for the education of the colored

children of this District, the class alone that the honorable Senator from Massachusetts directs his efforts to elevate and improve. I say here that the educational facilities for the children of the colored people of this District exceed in their generosity, and at the cost of the white people of the District, that of any other portion of the country known to me. I shall ask the Clerk to read a law that was passed and approved on the 23d of July, 1866, in respect to this class of people. I cannot believe that the Senate, if they were aware of what has been done and is now existing, the gratuities in favor of this class of people, would still insist, or permit the honorable Senator from Massachusetts to ingraft upon the present laws new provisions so hostile to the happiness of both.

I ask for the reading of the law which I have sent to the desk.

The Chief Clerk read as follows:

An act relating to public schools in the District of Columbia.

Be it enacted, &c., That the eighteenth section of the act entitled "An act to provide for the public instruction of youth in the county of Washington, District of Columbia, and for other purposes," approved June 25, 1864, shall be so construed as to require the cities of Washington and Georgetown to pay over to the trustees of colored schools of said cities such a proportionate part of all moneys received or expended for school or educational purposes in said cities, including the cost of sites, buildings, improvements, furniture, and books, and all other expenditures on account of schools, as the colored children between the ages of six and seventeen years, in the respective cities, bear to the whole number of children, white and colored, between the same ages; that the money shall be considered due and payable to said trustees on the 1st day of October of each year, and if not then paid over to them, interest at the rate of ten per cent. per annum on the amount unpaid may be demanded and collected from the authorities of the delinquent city by said trustees.

SEC. 2. *And be it further enacted*, That the said trustees may maintain an action of debt in the supreme court of the District of Columbia against said cities of Washington and Georgetown for the non-payment of any sum of money arising under the aforesaid act of June 25, 1864.

Approved, July 23, 1866.

Mr. BAYARD. Now, Mr. President, may I not safely ask the Senate and safely ask the country, nay, even the honorable Senator from Massachusetts himself, was there ever a more generous provision made for an impecunious and depressed class of people, socially and financially? Was there ever in the history of the world, according to its proportion, a more generous provision made? Why, what is it? No white child shall receive the benefits of a public education the cost of which is defrayed by taxation upon the property of the District, nineteen twentieths of which, if not fifty-nine sixtieths of which is owned by white people, no white child shall receive any benefit from moneys so raised for educational purposes unless equally with him a colored child, whose relatives have only borne an insignificant portion of this taxation, shall receive equal benefit. You have condemned by that law the people of this District to such a condition of ignorance as the withdrawal of public schools can bring with it as they themselves shall decree by withholding equal advantages at their cost to the colored people. That is the result. It is a measure of the strongest and harshest coercion, of which the white people might complain, which a mere sense of justice would have declared to be extreme and harsh, but which certainly, looking at it from a point of view of the advantages derived by the colored people, is generous and large-handed in the extreme.

You have by this act given these people for the last six years a full and fair opportunity for testing and exhibiting their own capacity for self-government. Their moneys have been as great in proportion, their field of choice for teachers and educators has been as large; and it seems to me that fairness would dictate that those who have made the statement, that the colored man needed simply equal opportunities to vindicate his equality, intellectually and otherwise, with the white man, should now be ashamed to ask that this opportunity and this test should be destroyed and withdrawn.

Senators, if it be true that in the six years of this experiment, an experiment made almost without cost to those who have had the benefit of it, an experiment made almost solely at the cost of the white people of the District, you have proved nothing but that these people cannot get along by themselves, what is necessarily involved in such an admission? An inferiority, an absolute inferiority, a confession of some great defects which must exist by the law of nature, and against which these puny efforts of human legislation will prove utterly and absurdly fruitless. There has been given to these people an experiment full and thorough, without qualification, without condition, as fair as was ever offered on the face of the earth, an experiment conducted not at their own expense, for they were too poor perhaps in this world's goods to have made the experiment, but conducted at the expense of the white people of this community, and chiefly, almost entirely, at the cost of the property held by the white people.

A report was made by the trustees of the colored schools for Washington and Georgetown to the Secretary of the Interior on the 31st of December, 1870, which was communicated to the Senate by the Secretary of the Interior on the 18th of January, 1871, and forms Executive Document No. 20 of the third session of the Forty-First Congress. On page 3 of that report I find a table of the moneys actually received during the year ending June 30, 1870, published by these trustees in July. There was a total amount received

of $72,667 15. How much of that was paid by the white people can readily be understood. Certainly it is safe and correct to say that a very insignificant fraction of the amount was drawn from the property of the colored people themselves, that the great bulk of this sum was extracted from the property of the white people in this District. The population of the District of Columbia, according to the census of 1870, amounted to a total of 131,700 souls. Of those 88,278 were white people and 43,404 were black people. The white people outnumbered the blacks rather more than two to one. Of 43,404 black people $72,667 is appropriated in a single year for the education of their children ; and that is not all, sir.

On the 28th of July, 1866, I find another act of gratuity to this class of people, and I ask the Clerk to read the law that I have marked in the book which I send to the desk.

The Secretary read as follows:

An act donating certain lots in the city of Washington for schools for colored children in the District of Columbia.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Commissioner of Public Buildings be, and he is hereby, authorized and required to grant and convey to the trustees of colored schools for the cities of Washington and Georgetown, in the District of Columbia, for the sole use of schools for colored children in said District of Columbia, all the right, title, and interest of the United States in and to lots numbered one, two, and eighteen, in square nine hundred and eighty-five, in the said city of Washington, said lots having been designated and set apart by the Secretary of the Interior to be used for colored schools. And whenever the same shall be converted to other uses, they shall revert to the United States.

Approved, July 28, 1866.

Mr. BAYARD. Here, then, is not only a gift of money, a large and ample sum, $72,000 in a year for the children of forty-three thousand people, but we have the free gift by the Congress of the United States to these people of valuable lots in the city for the purpose of having school-houses erected upon them. And I may say further, that the last ten years of legislation will be found to be a history of constant gratuities, of constant donations of a similar nature, discriminating always in favor of the colored people of the District. I am not now speaking of this in terms of complaint. There they are. I am not disposed to withdraw from them advantages which have vested for their benefit. I am only stating all that has been done, for the purpose of showing how utterly unnecessary, how utterly unjust is this new and fatal invasion of the poor privilege left to the white people of this District, at their own cost, of educating their children in public schools by themselves.

I now ask the Clerk to read further, as the condition of my sight forbids it, the account given by the trustees of colored schools themselves, in order that it may be seen how ample are their means, how hopeful is their condition, how abundantly provided they are in the present, and how their resources bid fair to enable them to develop their schemes of education to the fullest and most liberal extent in the future.

The Secretary read as follows:

"There are now in operation, as already stated, sixty-six schools, in which sixty-four teachers and assistants, including a teacher of music, are employed by the trustees. Five teachers in addition are furnished and paid by the New England Friends' Association, to whom great credit is due for the liberal and long-continued aid they have rendered to the work of education in this city. They have, however, given us notice that they will be compelled to withdraw before the close of the school year, for the want of funds to go on. It should be added in this connection that the trustees, having recently obtained from the corporation of Washington funds sufficient for the purpose, have already contracted for the erection of a large and commodious school building capable of seating five hundred and fifty pupils. It will take the place of a dilapidated building now standing on C street south, near Second east, and will add about three hundred seats to the accommodations now existing. The building is to be of brick, sixty-eight feet front by seventy-five in depth, and will have four stories, with a Mansard roof. It will have ten school-rooms, each twenty-five by thirty-two feet, and an assembly hall of sufficient capacity to seat all the pupils, with ample cloak-rooms, closets, provisions for ventilation, and other conveniences. In the basement, provisions will be made for heating apparatus, fuel-rooms, janitor's rooms, and play-rooms for each sex, in addition to inclosed grounds in the rear of the building. The plans and specifications for this school-house have been prepared with great care by Edward Clark, esq., the well-known and accomplished architect of the Capitol, whose valuable services in this matter have been gratuitously rendered. It is believed that, when completed, this building will be not only an ornament to the section of the city where it will stand, but at the same time the most convenient, well adapted, and economical structure of the kind in the city or District. It will be erected as soon as the season will permit, and will cost about twenty-five thousand dollars.

"Beside this, the trustees estimate that the revenue of the current school year (if promptly paid over) will enable them to erect another building of equal capacity in another section of the city, which they hope speedily to put under contract."

Mr. BAYARD. Here we have by the statement of the trustees of these very schools, colored men whose names are signed to this report, the history of school-house architecture, and a view presented of the most glowing picture of prosperity and advancement, large, commodious buildings with Mansard roofs, rooms sixty-eight by seventy five feet in their dimensions, provision for ventilation, and all other conveniences, cloak-rooms, closets, fuel-rooms, heating apparatus, play-grounds! Why, sir, where else in this country are such provisions made for a class of people who are the poorest in the community, at the expense of others, and made exclusively for them, for this, be it recollected, is the provision for colored children exclusively?

Ah! sir, I can bring to mind the poor, rude log huts throughout the country, in which

bright minds, the hopes of the nation—not "the wards of the nation," but the hopes of the nation—the keen, bright eyed active boys are painfully and diligently fitting themselves to take part in the government of this country and in the great battle of life, who are doing it without one tithe of the advantages that simple gratuity, that mere charity, without one particle of individual effort by the beneficiaries themselves, is now bestowing upon this class of people in this District. And yet still insatiate, the cry is for more. Not satisfied with that, something else is demanded. It cannot be for the purpose of making the experiment; it cannot be for testing the capacities of these people: it is for another object, as I consider fatal to their happiness as it is to the happiness of the white race.

There is one fact in this report of the trustees of the colored schools, men of their own race, to which I desire to draw the attention of the Senate and of the honorable Senator from Massachusetts. At page 6 they report that they have seats in the public schools, excluding entirely the private schools, for 2,944 children, and at page 12 we find the other significant fact that they can procure the attendance but of 2,811. What is the meaning and what result do you draw from these figures? It is that you have to-day and have had for two years past an accommodation for this class of people in public schools, created for them almost gratuitously, in excess of what they themselves have sought to avail themselves of. How are you to answer that fact? Let it be known that there is an excess of accommodation for 133 scholars in the schools already, which they have not availed themselves of for the past two years. What excuse can there be for such a proposed act as this in the face of such a fact? If they were suffering, if they were overcrowded, if they had insufficient buildings and had no hope of getting others, there might perhaps be some reason in the cry to give them further facilities with those who believe that mere school education is the one thing necessary, without regard to that moral training, the training of the fireside, the training of the mother and of the home, which to my mind is ten thousand times more important in the formation of individual or national character than any system of schools that ever was devised. This education of the head without any respect to the education of the heart, is the falsest and most pernicious doctrine that ever cursed a people. And I say that this excess of accommodation over the attendance of these people in the public schools is exclusive of the private schools which they are perfectly at liberty to establish, and to which many of them are well able to send their children. It is well known that benevolent societies and individuals in the northern States have, at their own expense, assisted to maintain additional colored schools in this District.

Have I not shown to the Senate a large-handed, liberal provision for the education of colored children in this District at but trivial cost to that race? Is not, therefore, the present measure utterly unnecessary? But is it not also grossly unjust to those who are called upon to do more? It is not the Senator from Massachusetts who is to pay for this; it is not the Senators who are called upon to vote for this bill who are to pay for this; it is a population who have no voice upon this floor, who have no representative upon this floor, and who, if appealed to to morrow, would overwhelmingly deny the justice or the necessity or the propriety of any such act. But they cannot be heard; and here in what we call a republican form of government, in a Government, forsooth, based upon the consent of the people, where their will should be the instruction to the legislator, limited by the written Constitution which is his rule as well as theirs, we have without their expression of a desire for this thing a measure of this kind forced upon the body. Yea, moreover, I say here to the Senate and to the country that the Senator from Massachusetts dare not appeal to the white people of this District to sustain the measure by their votes. He could not do it. He knows that if he attempted it the answer would be overwhelmingly in opposition to what he now proposes; and if this measure is to become a law, it will be by breaking down the opinions, the feelings, the wishes, the interests of these people whose money you are voting out of their pockets for what I have termed a mere act of visionary zeal.

I shall say nothing further now upon the utterly unnecessary character of this law. I have termed it unjust—unjust because those who are to pay for this will do so unwillingly, because it is against their wishes as it is against their interest; and, sir, does any man suppose that the instincts and the prejudices of mankind, whether they are inborn or whether they be cultivated by long habit and by tradition, are entitled to no weight? I say on the contrary they are entitled to the most constant and respectful and careful consideration. If you disregard a man's prejudices and his tastes, his habits of thought and his habits of life, what chance have you to make that man happy? How can it be? Will any wise parent disregard the peculiar characteristics and tastes of his children? No, sir; he cannot do it either in regard to their physical tastes or in regard to their moral dispositions. The idiosyncracies of children are entitled to the highest respect; and the man who will so govern his family, or the legislator who will so pro-

pose to govern the State as to disregard the individual opinions, feelings, and wishes of those upon whom his direction or his will is to act, is certainly a very blind man. and I think a cruel, unfaithful parent and an unsafe maker of laws.

I do consider, Mr. President, the apothegm a just one that no man is worthy of the place of a ruler over his fellow-men or the name of statesman who will frame and pass laws distasteful to his people, without regard to their acceptability to those whose habits and whose customs they affect. History is covered with illustrations of the truth of what I have said. It was but a few years ago that under the rigid and despotic rule of Great Britain in India those inferior and subject races were compelled in some degree to adopt habits violating the traditions of their race; and what was the result? I have seen from intelligent and careful authority that it was the Brahmin's tradition that the grease from cattle should not form part of their food. It was the violation of that tradition of their caste, of their class, compelling them by military order to bite the cartridge that was greased with the grease of cattle, that was the point at which their rebellion, called the Sepoy rebellion, exploded. It drenched India in blood, and led to results that no man can contemplate without horror. They have learned something since. They have learned that in order to keep a people affected well toward those that rule them it is the essentials of government that must be insisted upon, and the non-essentials must be left to their instincts, their tastes, and their habits. One might well ask what right has man to attempt to govern his fellow-man except it be for his happiness? What right has Congress to pass laws in this District except for the prosperity and the happiness of the people whose fate has been so completely committed to their hands? Even supposing an instinct to be unreasonable in the abstract, you are unwise if you disregard it, you are cruel if you disregard it. The people of New England have many traditions; they have habits of thought peculiar to themselves. We all know, and the country has witnessed the energy with which their individualities and the peculiarities of their section are sought to be impressed by them wherever they may go. I ask any man of intelligence and character—and there are many such upon this floor from that section of the country, either now directly representing it, or children of her soil, who have migrated to other portions of the country—I ask what would be the fate of a lawgiver who should pass laws in that country violating any one of the thousand habits and traditions that cluster around New England homes? Why, sir, the man who was a representative that sought to do this thing would find himself quickly remanded to private life; and although their respect for individual opinion might leave him unmolested, he would find that he had lost public regard and public respect, and would be judged an unfit man to rule over the people when he ruled them without regard to their wishes, or, if you please, their prejudices.

Mr. President, there is one other fact to be urged in this connection. This bill may be desired by a portion of the colored people, but it is not desired by all or nearly all of them. We have had upon this floor a contribution of opinion on that subject. I remember my honorable friend from New Jersey [Mr. STOCKTON] had a remonstrance made to him from some of these people with whom we constantly mingle in our ordinary lives. I would add my own conviction to his, that by quiet and rational conversation with the best, the most respectable, and most intelligent colored people of this District, I should find a very large mass of opinion adverse or indifferent to this measure, and I will not say that when the matter is pressed upon them, that when you hold it up as a question of party, throw it into their political parties, in which they are bound together by such bands as totally destroy their individuality—bound by oaths, bound by prejudices, so that when you touch the party point the colored man's independence is destroyed, so that although he may in his heart and in his conscience believe the measure to be wrong, yet if it be subjected to the touch of party he is compelled to give up his individual opinions and go with his people. That is not only true in the District of Columbia, but it is true of every community where the colored men exist in numbers; and it is unhappy for them that it is so. But this report itself admits it, and on page 34 will be found the confession that there is a difference of opinion among these people themselves in regard to this proposed law. They hesitate, they doubt where the Senator from Massachusetts presses forward with relentless haste to solve questions which certainly, to say the least, are not necessary to be solved at this time. These trustees say:

"In reference to schools of mixed races, I think a difference of opinion may exist among the real friends of the colored people."

There is another portion of this report in which the same confession is made. It will be admitted as a fact that there is even among these people themselves a very wide difference of opinion on this question. As I said before, if the matter be dragged as it has been dragged into party and once made a party test upon them, those who individually and independently would be disposed to object to the measure will find themselves overborne by the heated party feeling that so pervades and inthralls their race.

Then we find, according to the confession of the trustees, that there is among the colored people themselves a wide division of sentiment, large classes of them opposing, and that should be enough to make the Senate pause. But what other facts do we find? They constitute less than one third of the total population of the District. Granting that they are equally divided, what do you find? That less than one quarter of the people of this District, and those who pay the least expense are in favor of this confusion of races in the public schools. What white man or white woman who lives in this District, and has children whom he or she expects to be subjected to this contact, has asked for this measure? Not one. Then what do you find? With more than seventy-five per cent. of the people of this District either silent on this subject or opposed to the proposition, you find the honorable Senator from Massachusetts, the professed republican, the believer in the great doctrine of republican majority, insisting that one fourth shall control the other three fourths. And this is called a Government by representation!

No, sir; I said there was not one white man or white woman who has children whom he or she expects to be subjected to this contact who had asked for this bill or who ever will ask for it. And I go further: Senators, there is not a Senator on this floor who expects his children, his little girls, his little boys, ever to go to those schools and to be subjected to this contact, who will vote for this bill; not one; not one. They may condemn others under the call of party, they may condemn the children of their brother white men, whose poverty compels them to send their children to public schools, they may seek to compel them to this contact, but they will be very careful that they are not personally the sharers in such results.

No, sir, no blue-eyed, fair-haired child of any Senator on this floor, no little grandchild at that time of life when children are so open to mere impression, and especially to evil impression, will ever be permitted to suffer by this proposed contact. They may condemn others who are poorer, but they will be careful to save their own. Is this philanthropy? Is it magnanimity? Is it justice? Is it that other term that Americans should love—is it fair play to the white people of this District? Here is a community where your census tells you that the white people outnumber the blacks two to one. Yet they have been compelled by your laws to make a provision utterly unjust out of their moneys to sustain colored schools. It has been done. They have not refused; they have obeyed; they have complied with your laws. Will you not leave them the poor privilege of using what is left of their money after your exaction has been satisfied? Will you not leave them the poor privilege of using that remnant as they themselves shall see fit to use it? Was ever a proposition more tyrannical than this?

Now, what will be the effect of it if such a measure as this becomes a law? It simply will be to drive from the public schools the white children who now find there their only means of being educated. Not the children of the rich, not the children of those who can employ governesses or send them to private schools, but the blow is leveled against the poor. This is done, this deliberate act is done by those who here daily sing pæans in praise of popular education, who believe it to be the be-all and end-all of human statesmanship, who hold that mental education is the one thing needful, and that that must be had at all stages, and whether people desire it or not. This universal panacea for every wrong, moral, political, and religious, is now by a bill like this to be withdrawn. It is held to be a certain cure for every ill.

If it be so, a ground of assumption for those who state it, and have stated it always in this Chamber and out of it, among whom is the honorable Senator from Massachusetts, the author of this bill, and now its strong and earnest advocate; if this be so, then he may carry with it the other comforting fact that by his bill he will do more to prevent the benefits of education from reaching three fourths of the white children of this District than by any other measure he could devise. I believe that he is perfectly honest in his belief in the necessity and value of public education; and yet while he realizes that idea, the instant that he places beside it that dominating and overwhelming idea of his of the equality (to be forced if it does not naturally exist, or it may be the superiority, for aught I know, in his mind of the African race and their descendants to those of any other country,) lo, and behold, the value of education fades away! Every other benefit fades away, and this one idea that rules the rest like Aaron's serpent, swallowing up all that comes in its way, completely obscures his vision and disables him from seeing the necessary result of his own acts.

Mr. President, there is another and not so high a view to take of this subject. It not only in my opinion would be most injurious to the moral tone of the community, subjecting these little children at their tenderest age, when most impressible, to all moral influences, to contacts which cannot but be harmful; but there are physical and moral results to grow from this exclusion, for such it will be, of white children from the benefit of public schools of this District. Speaking now in regard to the material interests of the city of Washington and the District of Columbia, what is at this time especially needed here by every man whose

home is here compulsorily or by choice for many months of the year? It is the presence of skilled and diversified labor. That is what Washington now needs. She needs a population of mechanics, of small artisans, of what you may call minor manufacturers, who are generically styled as "the skilled labor of the country." Mr. President, the skilled labor of the country means the white labor of the country. There is no other class of skilled labor in this country or any other than white labor. The black labor, useful, excellent, valuable as it is, is not skilled labor. Neither manufactures nor commerce in its minor grades, nor mechanics in any of their forms, are materially aided by the contribution of what I may term the negro labor of the United States. They fill, as we all know, a most important and an essential grade in society. As menial servants there are none so available, none, in my opinion, who are their equals. The ready, kindly sympathy which they from their natures are so calculated and enabled to express makes them the most agreeable and useful menial servants. It is a class essential to the community. A community without the menial class is utterly defective. It is a grade quite as essential to the welfare and happiness of the community as the higher grades of intellect. Nay, they have other uses. There is an unskilled labor of various kinds, what is termed in biblical language "the hewing of wood and drawing of water," which they are able to fulfill in happiness to themselves and usefulness to the community; but no man here, no man on this floor or anywhere else, if he be an ordinarily intelligent man, will tell me that the skilled labor of the country owes any appreciable amount to the colored race.

Washington needs skilled labor; and yet what is the necessary result of this bill? Do you suppose that this class of artisans to whom I have referred, these men whose skilled labor is necessary to build up this city to what it ought to be, a fitting metropolis for the Union, will come here and bring their families, bring their property, and settle in a place where they cannot enjoy the advantages of education unless their little girls and their little boys are to be subjected to contact with the children of the negroes of this city? Why, sir, there can be but one answer to that. No man honestly believes, there is no Senator on this floor, even from the New England States, who believes there can be any doubt of the answer if you put the question to any intelligent mechanic in Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine. If you told him, a man who was a skilled mechanic, by whom the advantages of education were entirely appreciated, who had not the means to keep himself free from debt and keep his children at the same time at private schools, who desired to avail himself to the fullest extent of the public schools of the community—if you told him "Come to Washington, there is a fine field open for your exertions; there is a fair chance for you in your line of business; you will there prosper"—so far so well; the man would wish to come; he would desire to come: but when you coupled with it the fact that his little girl and his little boy would be compelled to associate with negroes in the public schools, he would not come; he would stay away; and there is not a man within the sound of my voice who does not know it to be so.

Therefore, Mr. President, I say with confidence that no real friend to the prosperity and advancement of Washington as a city will ever vote that such a measure as this should become the law. I do not think that any real well-wisher of the colored men or the white men either will vote for such a law. I should, perhaps, qualify that expression by saying no judicious well-wisher; but as I have said before, it would be as absurd as it would be palpably unjust to deny to the honorable Senator from Massachusetts the singleness of purpose, the consistency, the courage with which he has followed his darling idea to the exclusion of almost every other. I believe him to be a well-wisher in his own way, but I cannot but give him and give the Senate the result of my equally conscientious and independent opinion that his proposed measure of aid will prove the greatest hinderance and evil.

There is nothing that could really benefit the colored people of this country individually or as a race that I would not be rejoiced to sustain. I owe them personally throughout all my life for too many acts of personal kindness, and I am happy to believe that in the course of my life I never voluntarily hurt the feelings or injured the welfare of any member of that race; but I cannot believe that any well-wisher of that race can contemplate the effects of such a bill as this in this District without great regret and dismay as to its consequences.

Mr. President, this bill would not be complete at the present time if it did not contain some portion of that coercive disposition which seems to mark so unhappily the legislation of this country for the last twelve years. The idea that this is a voluntary Government sustained by the people because they love it, the laws executed because they represent the will of the people, seems to be nearly passed out of sight. There seems now to be no law that shall speak to the people by its own voice and by its own majesty, relying upon their ready assent to it because it is the law and because it is their law. No, sir; there must be a penalty; there must be something to drive them to obey, and such seems to me to

be the unhappy feature in almost every public law that is now proposed. There is no longer trust in the desire of the people to execute the laws of their own free will; but you seem to rely only upon the fact that they are to be scourged with fines and penalties and driven to the work which can never be so well performed as when the heart shall dictate the act which the hand performs. Congress has been so in the habit of driving and coercing the people of this country that it seems to me now that they have taken up that as the ruling principle of mere despotism in regard to every act of Congress, no longer trusting upon the hearty loyal wish of the people themselves to carry into effect voluntarily the laws which their representatives have made, and which if wise would commend themselves without recourse to penal threats. Therefore it is that in this bill we find suits provided for. Where, in the history of the legislation of any State in the Union, do you find fines and penalties attached to an educational bill? But here you have rights of action and here you have suits authorized, in which a trustee, not only for any violation of any of the provisions of this act, but even for an attempt to do so, shall *ipso facto* lose his official powers without trial, without adjudication, without hearing; the attempt shall be sufficient to remove him from his office, and the commissioners shall instantly appoint his successor, and damages are to be secured by an action on the case in behalf of any child, to be brought by a person duly authorized to sue in its behalf.

Mr. President, a bill like this, which is to be crammed or sought to be crammed down the throats of these people without their asking for it, and against what is known to be their wish, probably ought to contain such a provision as that. I have seen too often the Congress of the United States relying much more upon the force they could bring to execute a law than upon the moral sentiment of the community that they would obey it because it was the law. I long for the day when this coercive tone shall be silenced. I long for the day when the real wishes and the happiness of the people of this country—"the consent of the governed"—shall be the underlying principle of every act of legislation. It is "a consummation devoutly to be wished" that such a tone should replace that which now and for years past has been the governing tone of legislation.

There are other objections and results of this bill which I do not care to trouble the Senate with detailing. The remarks that I have made against it have been comparatively without preparation and unpremeditated. I know that there is another object. It is not the question of education of the blacks, for that has been amply provided for by taxation of the whites. It is not that there are not fine school-houses, ample accommodations, ample means, because a walk through this city will show such outlay, such expense for the benefit of these people as scarcely any portion of this country shows for the benefit of the white people elsewhere, much less here. They want to break down the barriers of race; they wish to break down the prejudices of race. Who made those barriers? Who implanted those prejudices? It was the God of nature; and all the human laws that ever were passed, or that ever shall be enacted, will be futile indeed. If men will not learn the folly of attempting to array their weak powers against His, they will be taught as men have been taught in the past, and taught at bitter cost to themselves. The object of thus bringing the youth of these two races together is to produce the fusion of races, the amalgamation of the races, or, by its more modern and fantastical term, the miscegenation of these two races. They believe that by beginning early, the minds of children, ductile and impressible, will be overborne, and the instincts of race for the time in their case may be overcome, and there may be a mingling, and that a mongrel race is then to spring up in this country and take the place of the two distinct races which now inhabit it.

I shall not take time here, for it is not worth while for me to refer to the great country of Mexico on our southern borders; a country which Providence has dealt with so liberally, toward which His hand has been most open with its bounties; washed by two great seas; the very natural seat and heart and core of the commerce of the world; but Mexico is a doomed and a blasted country, almost beyond the hope of man's imagination or schemes for her political salvation. Why? Her soil is rich; her climate is varied; the bowels of the earth are filled with the most precious metals. Why is it that a country so blessed by nature is in this hopeless condition? The answer is plain; you have corrupted the blood of her people. There is no longer a pure race in her midst, and the man who is best fitted to-day to govern (Juarez) is a man who is an Indian, and whose blood has been kept pure from unnatural intermixtures. You have a mongrel nation in Mexico, and what is the result? You have a nation without traditions, without nationality, without a moral tone, which after all is the very basis essential to a people; and what has destroyed it? Mongrelism, the mixing of the bloods of different races, has destroyed it; and you no longer have a race there fit or worthy or capable of sustaining themselves under a government of law, and of protectin themselves in their persons and property as a civilized nation.

As a contribution upon this point which per-

haps may have authority with the honorable Senator from Massachusetts, from the fact that the letter is written from Liberia by a pure negro, I would like the Clerk to read what he has said as one of the results of that policy of attempting, against the will of God, to mingle the negro and the white race of the country.

The Secretary read as follows:

"MONROVIA, *October* 6, 1869.

"MY DEAR SIR: I send inclosed a catalogue of all the students who have ever been in the Liberia College. It will be seen that not only were they not natives, (aborigines,) but more than three fourths the number have been largely mixed with the Caucasian blood, and among these death and disease have made sad ravages.

"The great practical difficulty in the way of succeeding with our schools is the lack of suitable teachers. It is sad to relate that notwithstanding the thousands of dollars spent annually here by the different missions for educational purposes, there are still but very few teachers to be found, especially among females, able to conduct properly an elementary school. The reason is that pains and money have been bestowed upon persons largely mixed with Caucasian blood, who, if males, have mostly died, or if females, have got married and assumed the cares of a family. It seems that the females of mixed blood, who are not obliged to put forth much exertion, and not subject to much exposure, last longer than the males. It appears, also, that mulattoes born and brought up in America, if they can pass through the acclimating process, stand the climate much better than those born here, but only by engaging in as little physical or mental labor as possible. Persons having an admixture of foreign blood are very frail, easily take cold, and seldom recover from a severe attack of illness. This will account in part for our want of enterprise and progress here. Such men have had the lead and management of things, and by the fearful example of their disastrous inactivity, have been obstructive guides, discouraging all energy and go-aheadativeness.

"Before the question of race came up here, mulattoes died just as they do now, but it was not noticed. Their morality was put down to the general unhealthiness of the climate. But since Professor Freeman, in his address of July, 1868, called the attention of the people to the startling history of mixed breeds on this coast for the last two hundred years, the mixed classes have been watching with alarm the numerous indications of the frail tenure of their existence.

"I have been for the last eighteen years connected with educational matters here, and feel safe in giving it as one reason why we are no better off in men to take charge of schools and churches, that the attention of educators has been principally devoted to persons of feeble constitutions.

"The idea was that the presence of white blood imparted a greater aptitude for learning, and such persons were to be fitted for teachers. Black boys of hale and hearty physique were left to grow up unnoticed. Many of them have taken to sea-faring life, or gone to reside as permanent traders among the natives, who might now be active workers in our destitute fields. But with all the advantages afforded to the miscegens, still the only professors for the college yet produced in Liberia are pure negroes; and the only man with enterprise, energy, and talent enough to explore the interior, calculate distances, and construct a map, is a pure negro: and in the future, if we have any scientific men here, botanists, mineralogists, chemists, &c., they are sure to be pure negroes, and perhaps from the native tribes.

"But what has become of the half and three fourths white *protégés?* In the Alexandria High School we had Armistead, Miller, Fleming, Melville, Augustus, Fryson, Samuel D'Lyou, Colston, Waring, James H. Roberts; all are dead. In Liberia College we have had James H. Evans, J. J. Roberts, jr., Beverly Russell, J. T. Chambers, John Henry, J. H. Harris, Edmund J. Payne; all dead. J. W. Leone is a raving maniac, and may die at any moment. In connection with this, I would like you to read a letter which I wrote last year to Mr. William Tracy, of New York, dated September 11, 1868. Facts, it is said, are God's arguments. I venture to affirm that if the names I have just cited had been negroes, three fourths of them at least would have been living to-day; for in all that space of time I know of only one negro connected with either institution who has died—N. R. Richardson, of sun-stroke.

"Now, who is to blame for these things? No one in the past; but if they are continued in the future, after God has presented his arguments, then those who continue them must be blamed. I do not charge guilt upon any one in the past, for I believe that these things were not done at the instigation of wrong passions, but under the delusion of a false theory. And you, gentlemen in America, proud of your race and blood, have thought, perhaps, that it must, as a matter of course, endure here when strengthened by a negro basis, and bring to the negro an accession of improving mental qualities. But your theory has not stood the test. So far as physical health and vigor are concerned, I would rather take my chance here as a pure Caucasian than as a mongrel. The admixture of the Caucasian and negro is not favored by Providence in intertropical Africa, whatever may be the case in America. Let me beg you to look at this matter at once before wasting any more thousands upon an impracticable scheme. God does not intend that the Egypt of America shall be reproduced in this African Canaan. If persons who are half and three fourths Egyptian could live and thrive here, if the families whose disappearance and extinction I have noticed in my letter to Mr. Tracy could have lived and carried out their views, and gratified their tastes, we should long since have had a miniature Egypt here, with its caste, feelings, and prejudices.

"The friends of the negro in America must learn to believe that the negro can exist and prosper without the aid of white blood in his veins.

"Now that slavery is abolished in America, and the blacks are being educated, it is to be hoped that all good men will discourage, as far as possible, the 'miscegenation' doctrine. The negro race is injured by it far more than the white, for by prejudice the nondescript progeny is consigned to our side, even if they are three fourths or seven eighths white, and thus involve us in an inextricable 'muddle.' This is certainly a vexed question. But the higher plane to which the American people have attained by the recent revolution has given them loftier views and wider sympathies, and has furnished the means of education for the negro which will supply the transition process from his low estate to a more intelligent and respectable position. Respect for the negro is becoming more and more, in the progress of events in America, the happy distinction of our age. The negro is being taught to respect himself, and soon he will think it no honor to mingle his blood with that of the Caucasian, Indian, or Mongolian."

Mr. BAYARD. Mr. President, I caused that letter to be read because I thought it well and apt that on such a theme a representative man of the negro race should speak, and speak to those of his own color in this community, and because, perhaps, I thought there might be an influence derived from such a source that would not be given to the enunciation of a white man by those whose peculiar views and overshadowing prejudices lead them to what I consider a violation of natural laws. The letter is to be found in the Smithsonian report for 1870 at page 386. The writer is a pure

negro, a professor in Liberia College, and it is addressed to a member of the board of directors of the American Colonization Society.

To repeat the orientalism which he has used, facts are God's arguments, and there is no fact in relation to this subject more proven by experience than that although you may quicken the mental powers by this fusion of the races, you diminish the moral power and tone, and equally the physical. If there be a hope for the advancement of the African decendants in this country into the ranks of other people, that they may become recognized as a race capable of the strains that civilization brings upon men, and of self-government to maintain themselves in the ranks of other peoples, it is to be found in the experiment of their colony at Liberia. There there is no advantage except in their favor. There all places of State and control are exclusively theirs. The white man is not permitted to go there. He is not permitted to own property, and he is not permitted, as in other places we know of, to cater for their votes for his own advantage, or to use them to plunder others.

This man, who seems a good specimen of his race, or he could not have written the letter which has just been read to the Senate, deplores the fact that by this fusion of races you have created an ineradicable weakness, which prevents them from attaining that age in which the mental powers have sufficiently grown to be of use. By this fusion or amalgamation you may have quickened their mental power, but you also destroy their physical health, so that death supervenes at the very moment that usefulness becomes possible. This was his contribution of the facts occurring now in the very day in which we live, which he was thoroughly competent to make from his experience, which he could make with weight, because of his interest. He was filled with the desire for the advancement of his people, and was filled with a sense of their highest interest, and being so inspired, he was indoctrinated, and tells you that the violation of this natural law by the amalgamation of the races is followed by death.

There are other phases of this question in which it is to be viewed unhappy and unpleasant, fit rather for scientific dissertation than for senatorial debate; not adapted, perhaps, for public discussion, ethical questions, physiological questions, moral questions; but all of them have but one end and point to but one result, that this amalgamation is forbidden by natural law; that the instincts of repulsion that keep the races apart, socially and physically, are the outcroppings of man's nature, put there by a power which your law, Senators, may attempt to stay and to thwart, but in the face of which all human laws will prove utterly and hopelessly impotent.